

B.C. on the Move: Engagement Meeting Notes

NOVEMBER 19, 2014

1:30PM

CRANBROOK

ATTENDEES/AFFILIATION	Dean Martin, Shuswap Indian Band
MOTI REPRESENTATIVES	Norm Parkes, Executive Director of Highways, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI)
NOTE TAKER	Carmen Bennett, Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd.
KEY THEMES (3-6)	
1)	Collaboration with partners: The participant expressed that capacity building is the most important thing, noting that it should be incorporated into any transportation plan.
2)	Highways and side roads: The participant noted that a focus on safety is important, highlighting Juniper Heights Road as the top priority for the community. The participant noted that having transportation corridors that are reliable and that service the needs of the population is very important economically.
3)	Transit: The participant noted that transit is a priority in the community, as it is a way for aging members of the population to stay connected.
4)	Rail: The participant noted that ensuring the safety of the railway is important, as the rail line runs through the reserve.
5)	Airports: The participant noted that the airport on the reserve provides an important connection for the community. If funding was available, this would be a priority, as the airport is used by emergency services.
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participant highlighted capacity building as an important consideration. Safety concerns at specific points on the highway and near the reserve are important and need to be addressed.
MOVING FORWARD – STRATEGIES	
1)	Moving People and Goods Safely and Reliably
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participant noted that transit is an important way for aging members of the population to stay connected. The participant noted that the most important thing economically is having infrastructure and transportation networks that work and that are safe. Reliability is especially important for a resort community. The participant noted that transportation infrastructure carries a big burden, which reflects on the whole economy. The participant noted that people drive from this region all the time to commute for work in Sparwood, Elkford, Fort McMurray and other areas. Reliable roads and air transportation are important in this respect. The participant noted that Juniper Heights Road (Highway 93 and 95, just north of the Athalmer intersection) is a safety concern, as the slope of the road is dangerous. The participant noted this is the highest priority, as there have been a number of fatalities in this area. The intersection of Athalmer Road near Tim Hortons is an issue. The participant noted there has been a lot of development on the reserve side, but not the other side, so the intersection is experiencing some congestion. A number of people have started taking a back road, which has taken some pressure off the main road. The participant noted they would be willing to work with the Ministry on further development of the back road, in order to distribute traffic. The participant noted there have been positive improvements on the highway between Invermere and Cranbrook. Continuing to add shoulders is helpful from a safety standpoint and to address wildlife concerns. The participant noted that the Highway 1 corridor is a priority, and is supportive of continued investment there. The participant expressed that rail is an important consideration. He noted there is an agreement in place with the railway regarding payment in lieu of taxes, but a number of factors need to be addressed for this to move forward. The participant noted that, because there was a coal spill about a year ago, there are some concerns in terms of rail safety. The Band would like to feel comfortable that there is an emergency safety plan in place with respect to the rail line through the reserve.
2)	Growing the Economy
3)	Connecting and Strengthening Communities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participant noted that air transportation is important. The airport located on the reserve is well-used and is important economically. It is also used for emergency services and forestry. The participant noted that airport funding could help with some necessary upgrades. He noted that the Band has already done some work on this in planning for future needs. The participant noted that transit is a priority, as it is important for people to have an alternate choice if they cannot drive. The participant suggested that an urban model cannot be applied to rural BC; a separate rural strategy is needed for transit.
4)	Maximizing Collaboration and Investment with Partners and Stakeholders

- The participant noted they would like to be a partner in moving forward with addressing issues such as Juniper Heights, as it is important from a safety perspective.
- The participant noted that the Band runs a gravel company, with equipment, and if there is an opportunity to be involved in more projects, that would be welcome. The participant noted that capacity building is the most important thing when talking about opportunity, so people can learn and get the tools to progress further in their careers. He noted that this matter is very important to the people right now.
- The participant noted that more First Nations are looking for RFPs to be tailored in a way that opens opportunities for their involvement. Encouraging the contractor to work with local First Nations is important. The participant suggested that RFPs would not be direct-awarded, but would be put out in a way that would involve the First Nation people a bit more.
- The participant stressed that capacity building is very important and suggested it should be built into the plan.

TOP THREE PRIORITIES FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS	
--	--

- | | |
|---|--|
| TOP THREE PRIORITIES FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The participant noted the most important thing is safety, and whatever the needs are, safety needs to be addressed. It is important to protect safety interests, as well as those of people who want to visit and invest in this region. • In terms of safety and reliability, improvements to Juniper Heights Road and the Athalmer intersection are high priorities. • The airport on the reserve is important to the First Nation and to the wider region, as it is used for emergency services and general aviation. Rail safety is a concern and a priority through the reserve, and the Band wants to ensure that an emergency management plan is in place to address rail safety. • Capacity building is a high priority. | |

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/DISCUSSION	
---------------------------------------	--

- | | |
|--|--|
| ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/DISCUSSION | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The participant noted that getting input from rural areas allows the Ministry to connect the dots and see the important themes that run through rural B.C. | |